

Websites aim to promote planting, protection of trees in Bay region

New sites created to help communities meet forest buffer, tree canopy goals

Two new websites will help those working to plant and protect trees throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The [Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Network](#) and [Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network](#)—both launched through partnerships between the Chesapeake Bay Program's Forestry Workgroup, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service—were created to help communities meet their forest buffer and tree canopy goals.

Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Network

In recent years, the rate of streamside forest buffer plantings has been declining. But forest buffers are considered one of the most cost-effective practices for reducing pollution because of their ability to efficiently trap and filter pollutants carried by runoff. The Chesapeake Riparian Forest Buffer Network website was developed as a resource for those who are working to increase the amount of riparian forest buffers in the Chesapeake region.

The website's features include:

- An interactive map showing the progress of counties across the watershed in enrolling landowners in forest buffer programs,
- Information on the importance of forest buffers and tips on how to successfully plant and maintain buffers,
- Success stories illustrating the multitude of benefits buffers can provide, from water quality to economic benefits, and
- Resources on funding opportunities and outreach strategies.

Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network

Trees in urban and suburban communities provide an array of benefits: cleaning the air, reducing polluted runoff, providing shade and enhancing quality of life. The Chesapeake Bay region is home to a hard-working network of champions for community trees, and the Chesapeake Tree Canopy Network was created to help them on their way toward reaching their tree canopy goals.

The website's features include:

- Community Spotlight stories to connect, support and showcase the existing network of tree canopy champions,
- An interactive map showing the results of local tree canopy assessments, community tree canopy goals and points of contact,
- Information on the importance of urban and suburban trees and how to assess, expand and maintain community tree canopy, and
- Resources on funding opportunities and outreach strategies.

As part of the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), Chesapeake Bay Program partners committed to meeting goals for both riparian forest buffers and tree canopy. The [riparian forest buffer goal](#) is to restore 900 miles per year of streamside forest buffers, as well as conserve existing buffers, until at least 70 percent of the areas along streams throughout the watershed are forested. The [tree canopy goal](#) is to expand urban tree canopy—the layer of trees covering the ground when viewed from above—by 2,400 acres by 2025, providing air quality, water

quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed. The websites were created to support the achievement of these goals.